

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending and have been examined in the present application. Claims 1-4 and 6-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Kimura (WO97/00134 translated in U.S. 6,228,480 hereinafter “Kimura”). Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Taoda, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,981,425 hereinafter “Taoda”) in view of Heller, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,854,169 hereinafter “Heller”). Claims 1 and 8 have been amended hereby. Claims 15 and 16 have been added. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and below remarks.

Claims 1-4 and 6-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Kimura. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Amended claim 1 explicitly requires that “said granules having a maximum length portion of 1 to 10 mm and a minimum length portion of 0.1 to 10 mm.” The length limitations were previously recited in dependent claim 6 and therefore no new search by the Office is required. These limitations of claim 6 were rejected in the Office Action over example 74 in Kimura. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature of the present invention is neither taught nor suggested by Kimura. In example 74, Kimura merely discloses the dimensions (5 cm x 5 cm x 1 mm) of the slide glass used in that experiment. (Kimura column 37, lines 30-33). Kimura does not disclose or suggest the size of the granules comprising photocatalyst particles and silica particles as is expressly recited in independent claim 1.

In a further rejection of claim 6, in paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserted that “Taoda ‘425 discloses diameters of 1 micron to a few mm (see column 2, line 64)”. The description in Taoda concerns an average particle size of titanium oxide particle, not the size of the granules comprising photocatalyst and silica particles as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Kimura, Taoda nor a combination of these citations disclose or suggest the size of the granules comprising the photocatalyst and silica particles required by claim 1 in the present application.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Kimura. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 8 as being “sheet molding” described in Kimura. (Kimura column 6, line 21). Applicants respectfully submit that the description in Kimura merely indicates that sheet molding can be used as one of the methods for carrying an adhesive layer on a substrate. Kimura does not indicate how the granules can be formed. In order to better distinguish the invention in the current application from Kimura, claim 8 has been amended to recite the extruding step that is neither disclosed nor suggested by Kimura.

New claims 15 and 16 were added to fully describe the Applicants’ invention. Support for claim 15 can be found on page 9 of the specification, and support for claim 16 can be found in Examples 1 and 2 of the present application.

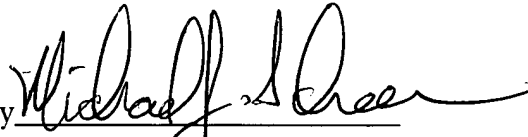
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In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this case to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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